



NEEDED

School Crossing Guards

The DCR is hiring school Crossing Guards to work part-time in selected areas throughout Boston and greater Boston. Please call Christine Kurker at 617-626-1421 for more information.

SAVE THE DATE!

The Bureau's **Annual Meeting** will be held this year on **Wednesday, September 5th at Hopkinton State Park**. Stay tuned for more details.....

WANTED!!

Summer Seasonals – We'd love to hear about your experiences as a Summer Ranger. Please send in brief articles to share in this newsletter. Send pictures, too!

Ranger Dispatch

Bureau of Ranger Services

251 Causeway Street • Boston, MA • (617) 626-4963

Volume 1, Number 1

Summer 2007

Summer Seasonal Ranger Program



Submitted by Ranger Keth Vicari, 3rd year seasonal Park Ranger, Harold Parker State Forest



Submitted by Ranger Stefan Berg, 1st year seasonal Park Ranger, Harold Parker State Forest.

Things are different here from Wompatuck State Park, where I first started. Working here at Harold Parker State Forest has been a great time; I have met a lot of interesting people from fishermen to mountain bikers and the weekend warrior that gets lost. It's always a great time here; the staff does a great job of enforcing the rules when a ranger isn't present to keeping the park/forest clean; also, the regional staff will go out of their way to help with any problems you may encounter along the way.

This is a quiet forest, not a lot of people know about this 4000 acre park in their own backyard. But little do people know there is a lot to be found here from great fishing spots and killer mountain bike trails to scenic views and an awesome fresh water swimming hole.

In all, this is a great place to work and play. I enjoy talking to the patrons and informing them of activities to do also hanging out with the staff. It has been an awesome summer so far. (Knock on wood) ☿

It's been interesting switching from recreation in urban parks to the Bureau of Ranger Services in State Parks. I used to spend my summers balancing the water at Dilboy pool, working with a full staff of 13 lifeguards, 2 laborers, and an assistant manager. I'd coordinate the facility's use with almost a dozen child day camps. As recreation's pool and rink seasons seem to get shorter and the facilities older the one thing that keeps growing is Harold Parker State Forest. It may be old but age is good here. As a former facility supervisor, I can still see the operations side, but what I now see is public education and protection. My days now are spent in uniform with the beacon of truth upon my head, an unmistakable tan campaign hat teaching the public all about the forest. I keep the peace between campers, give advice to fishermen and show good trails to mountain bikers, hikers and even folks horse back riding. The woods are very different from the concrete, and I am enjoying every moment of it. ☿

Table of Contents

Summer Seasonals	1
DCRinfo	2
Ranger Training	3
Interpretive Services	4
SAR Dogs	5
First Day Hikes	6
M.I.R.T	6
Pool Security	7
Chief's Corner	8

Just the Facts: DCR's Incident Reporting Program

By Chris Williams, Deputy Chief Ranger

DCRinfo, DCR's web-based incident reporting software program, has now moved into utilization by Division of Urban Parks personnel. Starting in the spring, Rangers, and this summer, the first of field staff have been trained by Ranger Services and authorized to access the program and report incidents.

DCRinfo provides a secure program, accessible from any Internet connected computer, to record both major and minor incidents. It is DCR's legal database for incident reports and also provides multiple summary report functions. Additionally, when major incident reports are started and saved, automatic e-mail notification goes out to managers, External Affairs, Legal, the Chief and Regional Rangers, and others.


Utilizing the summary reports function, reports can be generated on a wide variety of categories to support DCR operational needs, staffing issues, targeted patrols, and security concerns. For example, several months ago, DEP offered help with surveillance cameras to document illegal dumping. To determine where the worse problem areas were, a list was quickly compiled utilizing **DCRinfo**.

Reporting in the program is accomplished through the use of drop down lists and fill-in-the-blanks. Many of the items required in an incident report such as dates, times, locations, and incident types, are pre-loaded in the form and just require a 'click' to add to the report. The narrative is typed in but users are trained to type (the facts only) first in MS Word to organize and spell-check it before cutting and pasting it over to the **DCRinfo** form. The report

should be completed as thoroughly as possible.

Users of **DCRinfo** are reminded that:

- Major reports are required to be started and basic information 'SAVED' as soon as possible within 24 hours.
- minor reports are to be entered and 'SAVED' within 72 hours of the incident.
- There should be only 1 report per incident but it could have more than 1 author.
- There is only a 45 minute window to start and 'SAVE' the report before the program terminates without saving anything.
- Use of the 'enter' key and quotation marks will cause glitches to occur and you could lose any saved information.
- The narrative should only include FACTUAL information about what happened not already entered above, and NOT include opinions or post-incident repairs, follow-ups, etc.
- The report should be completed and 'FINALIZED' within a reasonable amount of time.
- The 'FINALIZED' copy is printed out, signed, and sent in, with any attachments, to the Regional Ranger for review and filing.
- DCR HelpDesk should be notified for any computer or software issues with **DCRinfo**.
- Ranger Services provides training and authorization for the program and assistance with report content questions.

DCR staffs are encouraged to make full use of this valuable program. For training or other information, please contact a Regional Ranger. 

Ranger Training

By Chris Williams

The Bureau of Ranger Services is working towards providing the training necessary for Rangers to perform their duties. Several topics have been covered in the recent past with more planned for upcoming dates.

First aid and CPR training is continually being refreshed on an annual basis by Lieutenant Kevin Tucker and his team. *DCRinfo* training and authorization has been provided to all year-round and seasonal Rangers who need it for incident reporting. Newer State Park Rangers are completing their required 'Conservation Law Enforcement' and 'Reserve Intermittent Police' courses. Seasonal State Park Rangers

participated in their 2 week training in May and seasonal Urban Park Rangers from the mainland and islands completed a similar training in May and June.

In the SAR arena, many Rangers have completed their Search Technician certification with a few going on to 'Managing the Lost Person Incident' training. The Canine SAR Team never stops training and several dogs, both DCR and civilian, are fully qualified.

All Rangers are encouraged to attend training provided by HR in topic areas related to their job. A few took the 'Train the Trainer' classes over the winter and found many ways to

incorporate that training in recent Ranger training classes. Currently, plans are being discussed for future training. A multi-agency SAR search exercise has been scheduled for October 17th. A SAR 'mantracking' class is also being planned for sometime in the next few months. Deputy Chief Ranger Chris Williams is in contact with the Mass. State Police Academy to set up an investigations class for November.

Over the winter, additional training will be discussed in the effort to work towards the Bureau's long range plans of having required training available to support the core competencies needed by every Ranger. *CS*



Deputy Chief Adam Parr, shown here, provides training in traffic control to seasonal Rangers during this year's State Park Ranger Academy

Information on additional training can be found on NEPRA's website, <http://www.yankeeranger.org/>

Ahhhhh, The Field

by Barbara Buls, Acting Deputy Chief, Interpretive Services

August! That's impossible, it was just May, and we were hiring, training, gathering supplies and uniforms and looking forward to another season at DCR. Although this time warp happens every year, I'm never ready for it. Sitting in Kristin Karl's chair speeds the passage of time as well, as unfamiliar territory looms around every corner.

Kristin set the precedent of site visits to the regions, so when I walked through the doors of 251 Causeway I was determined to continue that practice. Thank goodness for precedents, for it is the field that keeps us all going.

Western Region was first, and farthest for those of us who live within site of the Atlantic. Marcia Champney, our new RIC took me first to DAR, where Victoria Loud gave us a super recycling art program, making pierced lanterns out of tin cans for the kids in the campground. A great conservation message within a fun craft program. Then we drove to Tolland where Geoff Coelho is starting out his first season with Nature Journaling for the kids in the campground. It was such a relief to be out in the mountains – we even saw a bear (my second in the state of Massachusetts!)

Southeast Region came next, and Regional Director Brian Shanahan joined RIC Amy Nelson and me for visits to Myles Standish Monument (Travis Roberts had us climb the monument – he does it 20 times a day), Pilgrim Memorial where I always learn something new (Megan Wheaton & Deborah Gustafson), Scusset Beach (Katherine Bellone has really fixed up the nature center), the Ernestina (for a look at the old lady), and Massasoit where Meredith Kellogg talked enthusiastically about the great kids that attend programs there.

Central Region East unfortunately fell on one of the hottest days we've had all season, but it was delightful on the top of Mt. Wachusett, where RIC Lois Breault-Melican and I visited veteran interpreter Jen Hart for a Summit Talk about the cultural heyday of the Summit Houses. We then went for a mile long stroll (hot!) along the Canal down at

Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park with Kathryn Parent, so professional in her long pants and campaign hat! We concluded our day at Purgatory Chasm in the shade with Peter Newcomb, who enthusiastically relayed stories of the chasm, both past and present.

Everyone looked professional and contagiously enthusiastic. I still have Northeast and Central West to visit in two weeks, and although life seems too busy to spend this "down time," it is vitally important for both field personnel and past field work lovers, like myself. These are the visits that remind us why we are working for the agency and completing most of our tasks behind a computer screen or in meetings. Thank you all for giving me the opportunity to once again walk on the wild side. ☞

COMING EVENT

The **Annual Ranger Paul Barnett Memorial Canoe Trip** will be held on Friday, Sept 7, 2007 at 10am. We will paddle on the Connecticut River from Elwell Recreation Area, at the intersection of Route 9 and Damon Rd. in Northampton, to the Oxbow boat ramp where a shuttle will be provided to return participants to their vehicles. Trip will last approximately four hours. Pre-registration is required. For further details and to pre-register contact RIC, Jennifer Schafer, 413-478-8299.

“WHO LET THE DOGS OUT?”

by Captain Jennifer Stowe

What's got 12 legs, lot's of hair...and the energy to run up and down Mt. Greylock at least 5 or 6 times? Could it be a DCR Park Ranger? Yes.....well, sort of. Meet “Maggie”, “Emmitt” and “Scout”, they are three canines owned and handled by DCR Rangers. The Bureau of Ranger Services has actively participated in K-9 Search and Rescue for over 17 years. Currently these three dogs along with three other civilian dogs make up the DCR K-9 Search & Rescue team. These rangers train on a constant basis and are often called upon to provide assistance at searches throughout the state for DCR, MSP and local Law Enforcement agencies.



K-9: “Scout”

Breed: Blue Heeler Mix

DOB: August, 2005

Favorite Toy: Frisbee

Handler: Ranger Michelle
O'Bannon

Location: Blue Hills
Reservation

“Scout” is in training to become a wilderness air scent search dog. Typical of her breed she is very smart and hard driving. She loves to play and learn new things. Scout was rescued from a shelter in Kentucky by the Friends of Mansfield Animal Shelter in Mansfield, CT. When Ranger O'Bannon met Scout she demonstrated the potential needed for her future job. She has had some basic obedience training as well as beginner agility which has prepared her for the challenges that lie ahead. She is currently field training with her other teammates and is doing remarkably well. ☞



K-9: “Emmitt Francis”

Breed: Golden Retriever

DOB: June 3, 2003

Favorite Toy: Tug Rope

Handler: Ranger Jennifer
Stowe

Location: Northeast Region

“Emmitt Francis” was born in Upton, Ma. He was purchased by Ranger Stowe with the assistance of the Worcester County League of Sportsmen. He is a living memorial for long time sportsman Francis Wollaston. Emmitt is Level II Wilderness Air Scent certified. He has participated in several Search and Rescue operations in the state. Ranger Stowe and Emmitt spend numerous hours in various schools around the state, teaching students how to stay safe and not get lost in the woods. Emmitt loves his job as a search dog and park ambassador and looks forward to his days working on the job with Ranger Stowe. ☞



K-9: “Maggie”

Breed: Yellow Labrador
Retriever

DOB: June 2000

Favorite Toy: Tennis balls
w/tail

Handler: Chief Ranger Curt
Rudge

Location: Statewide

“Maggie” is a DCR certified air scent wilderness search dog who started her training at eight weeks old. She's a happy, sensitive pup who loves searching more than anything else. Maggie continues to maintain her wilderness certifications and is working toward certifications in cadaver and water recovery. ☞



First Day Hikes

By Captain Mike Nelson

One of the most successful programs in Urban Parks is the First Day Hike, which is held both in the Blue Hills and at Breakheart Reservation. The program is one that can make the staff groan in anticipation, given that it requires a lot of work and management of large crowds on New Year's Day (when everyone is feeling a little tired after a late night). But it's also one that leaves staff and participants feeling good at the end of the day. A brisk hike gets the heart pumping and allows people to get off on the right foot for their New Year's Resolutions, which is one the reasons for the great turnout every year.

The first step is to get a commitment from staff, Friends Groups, volunteers, and other DCR partners. At Breakheart, the program is a collaborative effort by the Rangers, Park Staff, Friends of Breakheart, and neighboring Kelly's Roast Beef, who generously donates enough clam chowder to feed over 200 people every year. All agree on a starting time, and advertising begins a month or two in advance (newspapers, bulletin boards, brochure racks, local libraries, DCR website, word of mouth, etc.), and continues right through the end of December.

Then, on the day of the hike, we provide several hike leaders. This keeps the group sizes manageable, and allows us to offer hikes of varying length and difficulty. Inevitably, several hikers arrive late to the program, so we keep at least 1 hike leader at the Visitor Center to guide the late-comers. While the hikes are out, additional staff and volunteers start a fire and prepare the chowder and hot chocolate to warm up the returning hikers. It is a great, feel-good finish to the event, and provides an excellent opportunity to network, get to know the park visitors, and advertise upcoming programs & events - building on the momentum of our success. ☞



M.I.R.T. Masters the Majors

By Chris Williams

At a recent Bureau meeting, a proposal for the creation of a **Major Incident Response Team (MIRT)** was introduced. A Ranger II or III from the team would report to the scene of a major incident to assist in the management of the incident; assist the collection of information; ensure that staff is debriefed and offered critical incident stress follow-up; complete any further investigation; and assist in writing the incident report.

At a major incident on July 27th at Hopkinton State Park, Regional Ranger Jennifer Stowe responded to the scene and, with the assistance of supervisory staff, interviewed the park staff involved in the incident. She also collected employee statements and other documents for inclusion in the incident report. Finally, she assisted with follow-ups such as arranging the critical incident stress debriefing the following day and the retrieval of the AED used in the incident for further documentation. Throughout her investigation, Capt. Stowe kept all pertinent supervisory and management personnel informed and up to date.

It is envisioned that future major incident response will follow this example. A working policy will soon be distributed. It will include training requirements, the **MIRT** callout process, and on-scene procedures. The end product will be a comprehensive dossier of information to supplement the major incident report. ☞

Ranger Tom Bender is shown at the left speaking with some of the participants of this year's First Day Hike at the Blue Hills Reservation.

Pool Security


By Chief Curt Rudge

DCR park rangers are working closely with State Police, local police, Environmental Police and facility managers to improve safety and security at swimming pool facilities. As a result of a number of incidents at pools this summer, rangers have taken the lead in pulling together a list of security recommendations we hope will reduce the risks to employees and visitors in a sustainable fashion.

Long term solutions being examined for recommendation are:

- Entrance fees and an identification card program which would require pool attendees to either pre-register and be issued an ID card or be required to provide a photo ID in order to gain access to the pool.
- Improve perimeter fencing to deter unauthorized access to the pool area.

- Place security cameras and recorders strategically within the facilities to record activity both day and night to assist with identification of violators and assist with prosecution.
- Improve exterior lighting to deter unauthorized entry and illegal activity in both the pool and parking lot areas.
- Improve landscaping to reduce areas that hide would be violators from public view.

The bureau is actively pursuing the opportunity to host a Crime Prevention Officers School to train rangers to provide facility reviews such as the one currently underway at the Springfield Pool. Concepts such as “Crime Prevention through Environmental Design” and “Broken Glass” are incorporated into a two week training session enabling graduates to apply crime prevention concepts to our facilities in a number of ways. Hopefully, there will be much more to come with regards to these security issues. 



Deputy Chief Adam Parr and the Statehouse Rangers are pictured here with Governor Deval Patrick, during State Employees Appreciation Day this past June.

Chief's Corner *By Curt Rudge*

Welcome to the first publication of our Bureau News Letter, the "Ranger Dispatch." First and foremost it's a forum for all park rangers to share information and ideas. The intent is to connect rangers from the Berkshires to Boston Harbor Islands and from Division to Division. We hope to include news, training options, special events and activities from every corner of the bureau and look to all DCR rangers as potential contributors. Holly Bartlett, here in the Boston office, is our editor, publisher and designated haunt to secure articles and as such should be your first contact to contribute an article. I encourage you all to both read the newsletter and spread the word about the good work you are all doing as contributors.

In keeping with the theme, here are a few brief items the bureau is involved with or is working on. Most importantly, the Secretary's office has approved the appointment of Steve Ouellette as the new Park Ranger III for the Southeast Region. Please join me in congratulating Captain Ouellette on his new position and give him a hand if he calls for assistance. On another personnel note, Deputy Chief Kristin Karl-Carnahan just recently gave birth to a bouncing baby girl and as she is out on leave, Barbara Buls has stepped into her role and hasn't skipped a beat. We are also working to either join in or host a

Crime Prevention Officer's School this fall or winter. We strongly believe that upon completion of the school, DCR Park Rangers will be able to significantly contribute improvements to security at all DCR facilities. I am extremely pleased to note that Lieutenant Susan Survillo has taken the lead in advancing the Park Watch program in her district. Using Susan's model we are looking to be able to roll out the program on a statewide basis. And finally, we have entered the hurricane season for this year and park rangers are a key component of the department's emergency response plans from planning to communications and all sorts of emergency responses to situations as they arise.

In conclusion, the summer season is nearly over and I congratulate you all on the great job you have done. I would particularly like to point out the wonderful job our seasonal staff has done. Rangers and interpreters alike have worked hard to make sure visitors to DCR properties feel welcome, safe and receive an enjoyable learning experience wherever possible. On behalf everyone here in Boston, to all our seasonal staff I say thank you for all your efforts and hope we are able to welcome you back next year. ☘

We want to hear from you!!

Comments, thoughts and suggestions are always welcome, as are contributions. If you have something you'd like to share in this Newsletter, please send it in!

Bureau of Ranger Services, Suite 800
Attn: Holly Bartlett
251 Causeway St.
Boston, MA 02114

Holly.Bartlett@state.ma.us

dcr
Massachusetts



It's Your Nature